

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

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Czechoslovak Elbe River Navigation
Company

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The Czech Elbe River Navigation Company (OSPL-Ceskoslovenska Plavba Labeka in Prague) is under the Ministry of Transports in Prague. The company engages in river transport between Prague and Hamburg. Until recently the general manager of the enterprise was (fnu) Kohout. He was temporarily replaced by (fnu) Struha, a shock worker aboard the vessel Pioneer.

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sailors who are subject to obligatory military service abroad. The total number of administrative employees of the general directorate in Prague is approximately 150 persons. The total number of persons employed by the enterprise is approximately 1,500, of these about 600 travel abroad.

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Technical Equipment of the Enterprise

2. In use at the present time are the following vessels all of which are fast ships:

Pionyr - 400 tons
 Ressel - 400 tons
 Vaclav - 600 tons
 Ludmila - 600 tons
 Libuse - 600 tons
 Dunz - 300 tons approx,
 Jizera - 300 tons approx
 Berounka - 300 tons approx
 Sazava - 300 tons approx
 Dukla - 300 tons approx
 Sokolovce - 300 tons approx
 Karel IV - 300 tons approx

Wages and Working of Navigation Personnel

3. There are no fixed fairs for navigation personnel. The employees are required to work according to actual need, in order to load or unload and transport goods in the shortest possible time.

The average wage of the navigation worker is approximately 3,500 crowns per month. However, the pay varies because of the many hours of overtime worked by individual sailors.

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Security Provisions

4. There is no workers militia in the Czech Elbe River Navigation Company. Regular guards armed with pistols patrol the ports and warehouses on a 24-hour basis. The warehouses along the Elbe and Vltava Rivers are the property of the Navigation Company.

Political Conditions

5. No Soviets are in the navigation service or on the staff of the directorate. About 30% of the total number of employees are organized in the Communist Party; however, the number of real Communists is much smaller and amounts to approximately 10% of the total. Young sailors are, as a rule, more devoted to the Communist Party than the older ones, because they are granted special privileges. For example, a young boatman with 18 months navigation school and 15 months practical training on a boat receives the same salary as a sailor who has been in the service of the Czechoslovak Elbe River Navigation Company for 20 years, an innovation never known before. In addition, young sailors are often entrusted with the task of supervising the older boatmen, a fact which is sometimes very flattering to the younger sailors, many of whom become secret agents of the State Secret Police (STB). However, the majority of boatmen of the Czechoslovak Elbe River Navigation Company do not trust Communist propaganda, mainly because they have had the opportunity to observe conditions in other countries (Western Germany). The same applies to members of the Communist Party who have had the opportunity to observe the real situation but remain in the Party only because of the advantages connected with the membership.

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